

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 7397

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OEXC, PFOR, UR (SHELLEY, LOUISE)

SUBJECT: IREX EXCHANGE LUISE SHELLEY: SOVIET REQUEST THAT
SHE LEAVE THE COUNTRY

STATE FOR CU/EE, EUR/SOV; USIA FOR IEE

1. ON MAY TWENTY-EIGHT MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION'S CHIEF OF CAPITALIST COUNTRIES A. S. SEMYONOV CALLED IN ACAO RESPONSIBLE FOR EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE PROGRAMS TO ASK THAT IREX JUNIOR SCHOLAR LOUISE SHELLEY LEAVE THE COUNTRY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. SEMYONOV EXPLAINED THAT SHELLEY HAD BEEN IN CONTACT WITH "ANIT SOVIET ELEMENTS WHO WERE CONDUCTING ACTIVITIES AGAINST SOVIET AUTHORITY." THESE PEOPLE HAD BEEN ARRESTED, SEMYONOV SAID, AND THE MINISTRY WAS ASKING THAT SHELLEY LEAVE THE COUNTRY. HE SAID THAT THE MINISTRY WAS MAKING THE REQUEST VERBALLY RATHER THAN THROUGH A NOTE BECAUSE IT DID NOT WISH TO CREATE A SCANDAL. ACAO ASKED FOR MORE DETAILS ON ALLEGED ACTIVITIES OF SHELLEY BUT SEMYONOV SAID THEY HAD NO FURTHER DETAILS TO ADD. MINISTRY'S CONSULTANT FOR US AFFAIRS AND SUBORDINATE OF SEMYONOV, V. G. ZASEDATL', ALSO ATTENDED MEETING. SEMYONOV AND ZASEDATL' WERE APOLOGETIC AND SAID THEY REGRETTED THAT GOOD RELATIONS WITH EMBASSY
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ON EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE QUESTIONS HAD TO BE TROUBLED BY

THIS QUESTION.

2. CULTURAL COUNSELOR AND ACAO DISCUSSED CHARGES WITH SHELLEY MORNIG MAY 29. SHE NOTED THAT ABOUT NINE MONTHS AGO SHE HAD MET DISSIDENT MARCHENKO SOCIALLY AT AN APARTMENT AND THAT ABOUT FIVE MONTHS AGO SHE HAD MET BRIEFLY ON THE STREET TVERDOKHLEBOV. BOTH MEN HAVE SINCE BEEN ARRESTED. HOWEVER, SHE SAID THAT AS FAR AS SHE KNEW SHE DID NOT HAVE CONTACTS WITH PEOPLE WHO WOULD HAVE BEEN PART OF EITHER PERSON'S CIRCLE OR WITH OTHER SOVIETS WHO HAVE BEEN ARRESTED.

3. CULTURAL COUNSELOR REQUESTED MEETING MAY 29 WITH L. B. BAZHANOV, CHIEF OF THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS SECTION OF MHE TO SEEK CLARIFICATION OF THE MINISTRY'S ACTION. BAZHANOV WAS OUT OF TOWN AND A MEETING WAS REQUESTED WITH A. S. SEMYONOV WHO HAD CONVEYED THE ORIGINAL MESSAGE. EMBASSY WAS TOLD THAT SEMYONOV WAS ATTENDING A SEMINAR OUT OF TOWN BUT MIGHT BE BACK IN THE OFFICE BY THREE AND MEETING WAS ARRANGED FOR FOUR THIRTY, MAY TWENTY-NINE. HOWEVER AT THE TIME OF THE MEETING SEMYONOV HAD NOT YET RETURNED AND V. G. ZASEDATL' SPOKE FOR THE MINISTRY; FNU KOROTOV WHO NORMALLY DEALS WITH VISA QUESTIONS OF SOVIET STUDENTS AND SCHOLARS ALSO SAT IN.

4. CULTURAL COUNSELOR ASKED FOR A CLARIFICATION OF THE MINISTRY'S POSITION. ZASEDATL' REPLIED THAT LOUISE SHELLEY HAD HAD "CLOSE CONTACTS" WITH ANTI-SOVIET FIGURES WHO HAD BEEN ARRESTED RECENTLY AND THEREFORE SHE WAS BEING ASKED TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY. HE REEMPHASIZED THAT ALLEGED CONTACTS WERE CLOSE AND RECENT. ZASEDATL' ADDED THAT SHE WOULD NOT BE WELCOME IN THE FUTURE ON ANY IREX EXCHANGE PROGRAM. WHEN ASKED TO PROVIDE FURTHER DETAILS TO THE CHARGES, ZASEDATL' REPLIED THAT HE HAD NO NAMES BUT THAT THE "LEADERSHIP OF THE MINISTRY" HAD GOOD REASONS FOR ITS ACTION AND TOOK A SERIOUS VIEW OF THE MATTER. HOWEVER, HE SAID THAT BECAUSE OF THE GOOD RELATIONS WHICH EXISTED BETWEEN IREX AND THE MINISTRY, THE MINISTRY PREFERRED NOT TO MAKE A "BIG NOISE" (BOLSHOI SHUM) ABOUT THE CASE AND REGARDED IT AS A UNIQUE INSTANCE THAT DID NOT CHARACTERIZE EXCHANGE PROGRAM STUDENTS AS

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A WHOLE.

5. CULTURAL COUNSELOR CONVEYED SHELLEY'S DENIAL OF CHARGES AND SAID THAT THE MINISTRY'S ACT WAS NOT IN KEEPING WITH CURRENT STATE OF EXCHANGE PROGRAM AND COULD HAVE SERIOUS REPERCUSSIONS SINCE IT STRUCK AT FOUNDATION OF EXCHANGE, NAMELY FREE CONTACT BETWEEN PEOPLE, AS LONG AS THESE PEOPLE WERE NOT KNOWN TO BE ENGAGED IN

CRIMINAL ACTIVITY. ASKED IF MINISTRY HAD BEEN AWARE
SHELLEY HAD ALREADY HAD PLANS TO DEPART SOVIET UNION MAY 30,
ZASEDATL' REPLIED, "I THINK SO," AND ADDED, "LET HER
LEAVE THEN, IT'S BEST FOR EVERYONE."

6. EMBASSY SEES NO RECOURSE BUT TO RECOMMEND RECIPROCAL
ACTION BE TAKEN AGAINST COMPARABLE SOVIET EXCHANGEES.
A POSSIBLE COURSE OF ACTION WOULD BE FOR EMBASSY TO
MAKE DEMARCHE ON THIS MATTER WITH MFA AS WELL AS WITH
MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION. WE MIGHT STATE THAT
EMBASSY CANNOT ACCEPT CHARGE OF THIS KIND AND THAT
EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE IMPLIES THAT STUDENTS HAVE THE
RIGHT TO MOVE FREELY ABOUT THE RECEIVING SOCIETY MEETING
A VARIETY OF PEOPLE. SO LONG AS CONTACTS DO NOT INVOLVE
CLEARLY DEFINED CRIMINAL ACTIVITY, THEY SHOULD NOT BE
MATTER OF CENSURE OR REPRISAL. WE WOULD ALSO PROPOSE
LIFTING OF SOVIET EXCHANGEES' VISA HOPEFULLY UNDER
CIRCUMSTANCES SIMILAR TO SHELLEY'S. THIS WOULD MAKE
POINT THAT THE U.S. TAKES SERIOUS VIEW OF MINISTRY'S
ACT WITHOUT ESCALATING ISSUE TO POINT WHERE SUBSTANTIVE
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM OF SOVIET EXCHANGEES HAD BEEN
DAMAGED. DEPARTMENT MAY HAVE SUITABLE CANDIDATE IN
MIND.

7. ON SUPPOSITION STORY WILL MAKE ITS WAY INTO CORRESPONDENT
COMMUNITY AND AGAINST BACKGROUND OF TASHKENT GUIDE
SUBVERSION STORY (AND SUBSEQUENT POST MORTEMES SUCH AS
RECENT JACKSON STORY IN CHICAGO TRIBUNE), EMBASSY
PROPOSES FOLLOWING IF-ASKED PRESS POSITION:
YES, A GRADUATE EXCHANGE STUDENT HAS BEEN ASKED TO
LEAVE. STUDENT HAS CATEGORICALLY DENIED CHARGES OF
BEING IN CONTACT WITH "ANTI-SOVIET ELEMENTS," AND
PLANS TO DEPART ON SCHEDULE. EMBASSY HAS EXPRESSED
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TO MHE ITS STRONG FEELING THIS ACTION CONTRARY TO SPIRIT
OF EXCHANGE. THE QUESTION OF FURTHER ACTION HAS BEEN
REFERRED TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT REQUEST DEPARTMENT
CONCURRENCE.
STOESSEL

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